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ABSTRACT

This fifth edition of the "Mini-Digest" provides a pocket-sized compilation of statistical information covering the field of American education from kindergarten through graduate school. This information is found in much greater detail in the "Digest of Education Statistics," "The Condition of Education," and "Youth Indicators." The statistical highlights provide a quantitative description of the current American education scene. Information is presented on: (1) enrollment at elementary, secondary, and higher education levels, including enrollment by race and ethnicity; (2) teachers and teacher characteristics; (3) educational outcomes (course-taking patterns, graduates, dropouts, literacy rates, completions, academic achievement, and college degrees); and (4) educational finance. Statistics reveal that in 1997, education was the primary occupation of about 75 million people. Included in this total are about 66.3 students and 4 million teachers, as well as 4.4 million administrative and support staff. Contains 30 tables and 12 figures that present statistical information. (SLD)

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Mini-Digest of Education Statistics 1997

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Mini-Digest of Education Statistics 1997

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National Center for Education Statistics

The purpose of the Center is to collect and report "statistics and information showing the condition and progress of education in the United States and other nations in order to promote and accelerate the improvement of American education."—Section 402(b) of the National Education Statistics Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. 9001).

February 1998

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Foreword

Welcome to the fifth edition of the *Mini-Digest of Education Statistics*. The primary purpose of this publication is to provide a pocket-sized compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education from kindergarten through graduate school. The statistical highlights provide a quantitative description of the current American education scene.

The *Mini-Digest* is designed as an easy reference for materials found in much greater detail in the *Digest of Education Statistics*, *The Condition of Education*, and *Youth Indicators*.

These volumes include selections of data from many sources, both government and private, especially drawing on results of surveys and activities carried out by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). They include information on the number of schools and colleges, teachers, enrollments, and graduates, in addition to educational outcomes, finances, and federal funds for education. Unless otherwise stated, all data are extracted from the *Digest of Education Statistics*.

Overview

Education was the primary occupation of about 75 million people in the United States in the fall of 1997. Included in this total were about 66.3 million students enrolled in American schools and colleges. About 4 million people were employed as elementary and secondary school teachers and as college faculty. Other professional, administrative, and support staff of educational institutions numbered 4.4 million. In a nation with a population of about 265 million, more than 1 out of every 4 persons participated in formal education.

Clearly, from the large number of participants, the 12 to 13 years that people spend in school, and the hundreds of billions of dollars expended by educational institutions, it is evident that the American people have a high regard for education.

The Structure of American Education

Figure 1 shows the structure of education in the United States: the three levels of education—elementary, secondary, and postsecondary—and the approximate age range of persons at each level. Pupils ordinarily spend from 6 to 8 years in the elementary grades, preceded by 1 to 3 years in nursery school and kindergarten. The elementary school program is followed by a 4- to 6-year secondary school program. The elementary program is frequently followed by a middle school or junior high school program, which generally lasts 2 or 3 years. Students then may finish their compulsory schooling at the secondary or high school level, which may last from 3 to 6 years depending on the structure within their school district. Pupils normally complete the entire program through grade 12 by age 17, 18, or 19.

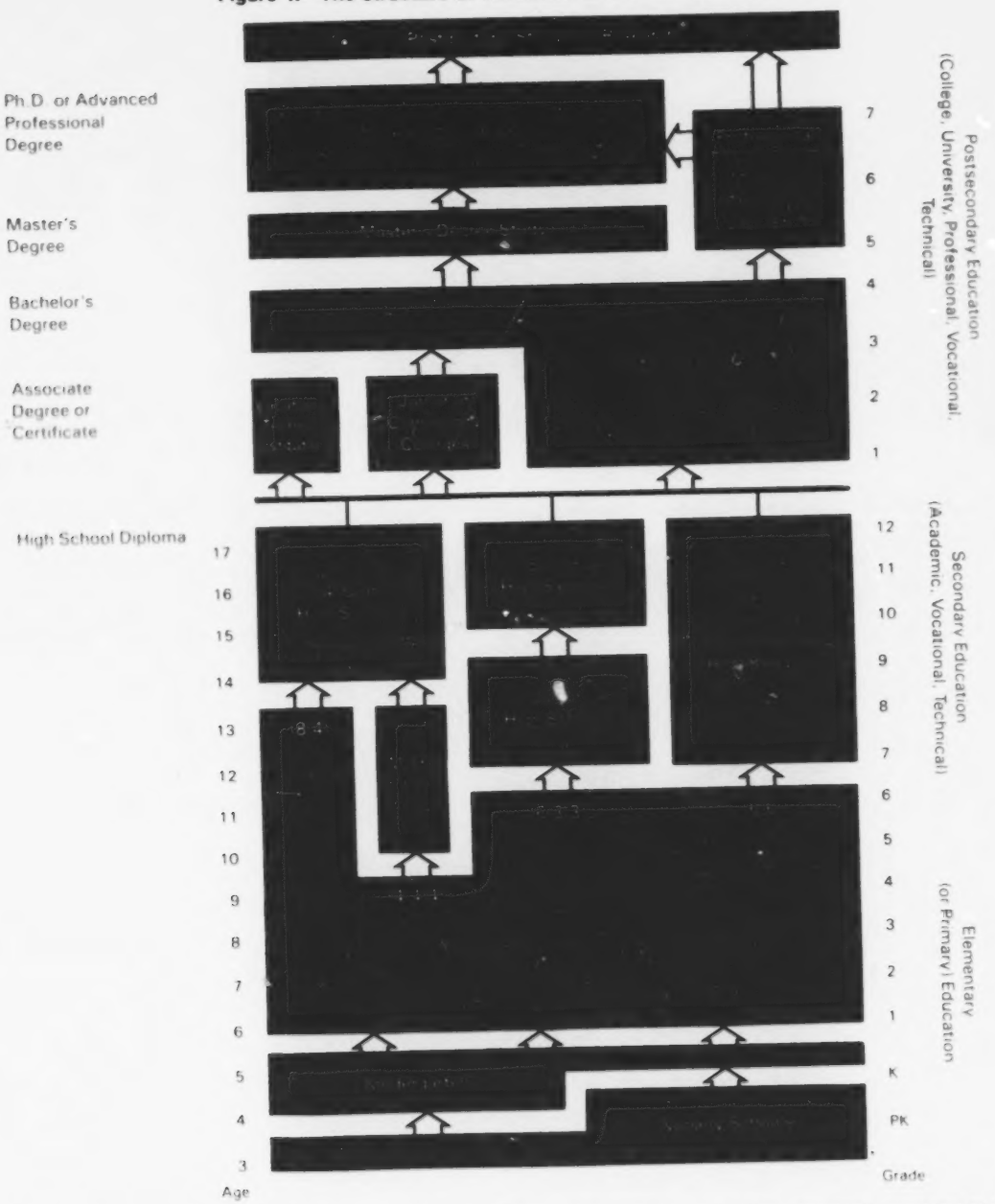
High school graduates who decide to continue their education may enter a technical or vocational institution, a 2-year college, or a 4-year college or university. A 2-year college normally offers the first 2 years of a standard 4-year college curriculum and a selection of terminal vocational programs. Academic courses completed at a 2-year college

are usually transferable for credit at a 4-year college or university. A technical or vocational institution offers postsecondary technical training leading to a specific career. Other types of educational opportunities for adults are offered by community organizations, libraries, churches, and businesses.

An associate degree requires the equivalent of at least 2 years of full-time college-level work, and a bachelor's degree normally can be earned in 4 years. At least 1 year beyond the bachelor's is necessary for a master's degree, while a doctor's degree usually requires a minimum of 3 or 4 years beyond the bachelor's.

Professional schools differ widely in admissions requirements and in program length. Medical students, for example, generally complete a 4-year program of premedical studies at a college or university before they can enter the 4-year program at a medical school. Law programs normally require 3 years of coursework beyond the bachelor's degree level.

Figure 1.—The structure of education in the United States



NOTE—Adult education programs, while not separately delineated above, may provide instruction at the elementary, secondary, or higher education level. Chart reflects typical patterns of progression rather than all possible variations.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

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Enrollment

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Elementary and Secondary Schools

Public Schools

Overall, public school enrollment increased between 1987 and 1997. In kindergarten through grade eight, enrollment rose from 27.9 million in fall 1987 to an estimated 33.2 million in fall 1997. In the upper grades (9–12), the net result of changes in enrollment over the same period was an overall increase in secondary students.

Table 1.—Enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools: Fall 1987 to fall 1997
(In thousands)

Year	Total	Kindergarten through grade 8	Grades 9 through 12
1987	40,008	27,933	12,076
1988	40,189	28,501	11,687
1989	40,543	29,152	11,390
1990	41,217	29,878	11,338
1991	42,047	30,506	11,541
1992	42,823	31,088	11,735
1993	43,465	31,504	11,961
1994	44,111	31,898	12,213
1995 [1]	44,840	32,341	12,500
1996 [1]	45,700	32,826	12,874
1997 [2]	46,353	33,216	13,138

[1] Preliminary data.
[2] Projected.

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

Private Schools

Private school enrollment has changed little over the past decade, with about 11 percent of all elementary and secondary students attending private schools. Total private school enrollment at the elementary and secondary levels was estimated at 5.9 million in fall 1997.

Table 2.—Enrollment in private elementary and secondary schools: Fall 1987 to fall 1997
(In thousands)

Year	Total	Kindergarten through grade 8	Grades 9 through 12
1987	5,479	4,232	1,247
1988	5,241	4,036	1,206
1989	5,355	4,162	1,193
1990	5,232	4,095	1,137
1991	5,199	4,074	1,125
1992	5,375	4,212	1,163
1993	5,471	4,280	1,191
1994	5,596	4,360	1,236
1995 [1]	5,688	4,427	1,260
1996 [2]	5,784	4,490	1,293
1997 [3]	5,863	4,544	1,320

[1] Preliminary data.
[2] Estimated.
[3] Projected.

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

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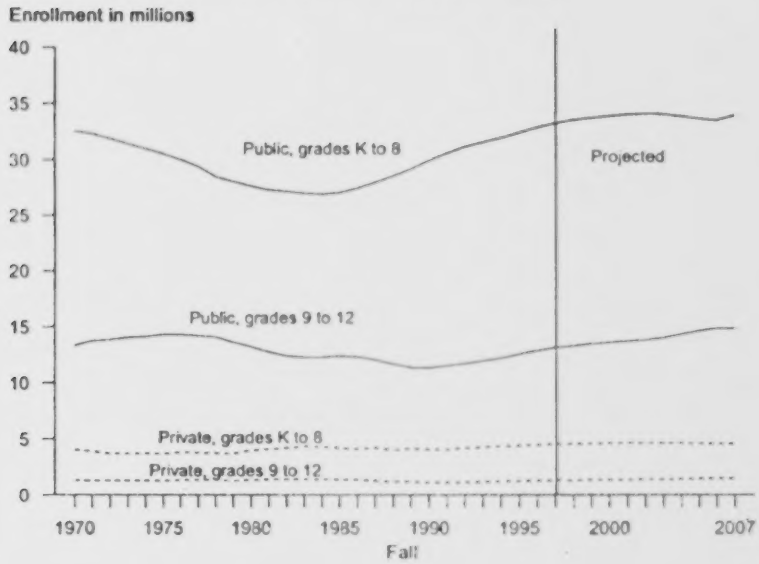
Projections

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) forecasts record levels of enrollment by the late 1990s. It is anticipated that by 1997, elementary and secondary school enrollments will surpass the previous high and will continue to climb into the

Figure 2.—Enrollment in elementary and secondary schools, by level and control: Fall 1970 to fall 2007



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next century. Elementary school enrollment is expected to reach 38.1 million and secondary school enrollment will reach 14.3 million in 1998. Between fall 1997 and fall 2002, elementary school enrollment is projected to grow by 3 percent, while secondary school enrollment is expected to rise by 5 percent.

Table 3.—Projected enrollment in public and private elementary and secondary schools: Fall 1997 to fall 2007
(In thousands)

Year	Total	Kindergarten through grade 8	Grades 9 through 12
1997	52,217	37,759	14,457
1998	52,725	38,096	14,629
1999	53,132	38,309	14,823
2000	53,465	38,490	14,976
2001	53,735	38,644	15,091
2002	53,962	38,740	15,222
2003	54,117	38,701	15,417
2004	54,250	38,493	15,757
2005	54,349	38,264	16,085
2006	54,388	38,068	16,320
2007	54,324	37,960	16,363

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

Preprimary Enrollment

Prekindergarten and kindergarten enrollment of 3- to 5-year-olds increased 27 percent between 1986 and 1996. The proportion of 5-year-olds enrolled in kindergarten programs has changed little since 1985.

Table 4.—Enrollment of 3- to 5-year-olds in prekindergarten and kindergarten programs: Fall 1986, 1991, and 1996
(In thousands)

Level and control of school	Fall 1986	Fall 1991	Fall 1996
Total	5,971	6,334	7,580
Percent enrolled	55.0	55.7	61.2
Control			
Public	3,689	3,963	4,683
Private	2,282	2,371	2,897
Level			
Prekindergarten	2,545	2,824	4,147
Kindergarten	3,426	3,510	3,433

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

Enrollment Rates

School enrollment rates for 5- to 17-year-olds have remained relatively steady over the past 10 years—at about 97 percent. Nearly all elementary-age children are enrolled in school.

Table 5.—Percent of 5- to 17-year-olds enrolled in school: October 1965 to October 1996

Year	5 and 6 years	7 to 13 years	14 to 17 years
1965	84.9	99.4	93.2
1970	89.5	99.2	94.1
1975	94.7	99.3	93.6
1980	95.7	99.3	93.4
1981	94.0	99.2	94.1
1982	95.0	99.2	94.4
1983	95.4	99.2	95.0
1984	94.5	99.2	94.7
1985	96.1	99.2	94.9
1986	95.3	99.2	94.9
1987	95.1	99.5	95.0
1988	96.0	99.7	95.1
1989	95.2	99.3	95.7
1990	96.5	99.6	95.8
1991	95.4	99.6	96.0
1992	95.5	99.4	96.7
1993	95.4	99.5	96.5
1994	96.7	99.4	96.6
1995	96.0	98.9	96.3
1996	94.0	97.7	95.4

Enrollment by Race and Ethnicity

The proportion of minority students in elementary and secondary schools increased between 1986 and 1996. The proportion of Hispanics in elementary and secondary schools increased at a greater rate than the proportion of blacks.

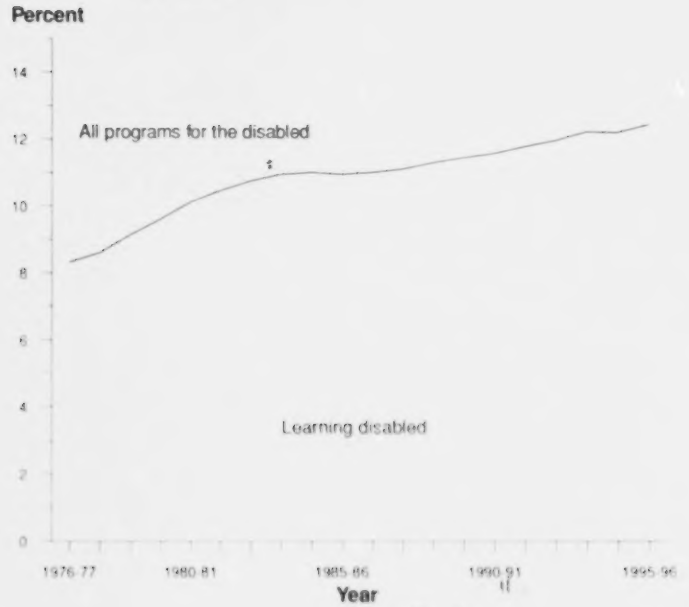
Table 6.—Racial/ethnic distribution of students in elementary and secondary schools: Fall 1986, 1991, and 1995

Race/ethnicity of student	Fall 1986	Fall 1991	Fall 1995
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
White, non-Hispanic	70.4	67.4	64.8
Minority	29.7	32.6	35.1
Black, non-Hispanic	16.1	16.4	16.8
Hispanic	9.9	11.8	13.5
Other, non-Hispanic	3.7	4.4	4.8

Enrollment in Programs for the Disabled

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, increasing proportions of children were served in federal programs for the disabled. Much of the rise during this period may be attributed to the increasing proportion of children identified as learning disabled. In 1976–77, 8 percent of children were served in programs for the disabled compared with 12 percent in 1995–96. However, since 1983–84, the increases have been relatively small.

Figure 3.—Percent of public elementary and secondary students enrolled in federal programs for the disabled: 1976–77 to 1995–96

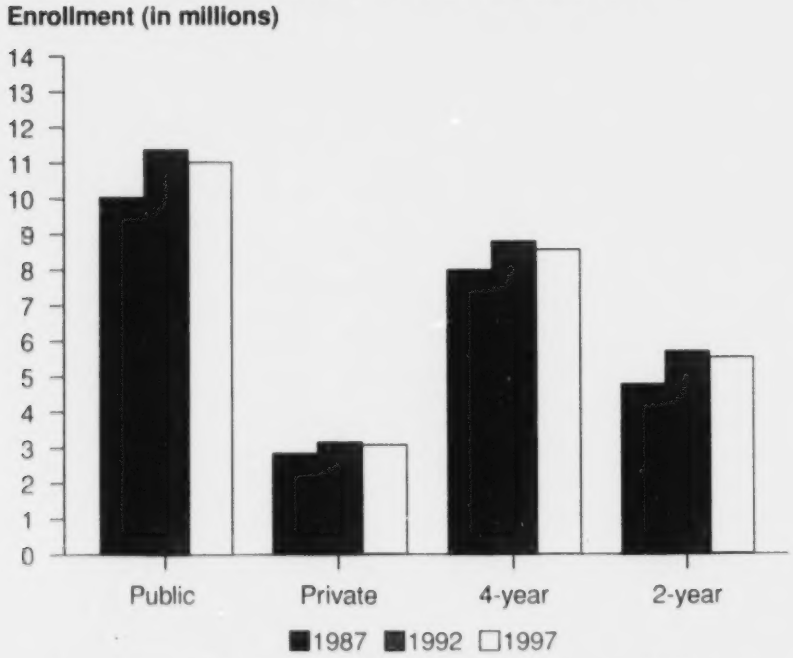


Higher Education

College Enrollment

College enrollment fell slightly below 14.3 million in fall 1994 and was expected to rise slightly by fall 1996. Of the 1997 students, about 9 million attend 4-year schools and nearly 6 million attend 2-year schools. Between 1987 and 1997, part-time enrollment increased at a faster rate than full-time enrollment, 12 percent and 9 percent, respectively.

Figure 4.—Fall enrollment in institutions of higher education: 1987, 1992, and 1997



NOTE: The source for 1997 figures is *Projections of Education Statistics.*

Table 7.—Enrollment in higher education: Fall 1987, 1992, and 1997

(In thousands)

Type and control of school, and attendance status	Fall 1987	Fall 1992	Fall 1997*
Total	12,767	14,487	14,085
4-year	7,990	8,765	8,582
2-year	4,776	5,722	5,503
Full-time	7,231	8,162	7,911
Part-time	5,536	6,325	6,174
Public	9,973	11,385	11,028
4-year	5,432	5,900	5,757
2-year	4,541	5,485	5,270
Full-time	5,267	6,011	5,812
Part-time	4,706	5,374	5,216
Private	2,793	3,103	3,057
4-year	2,558	2,865	2,825
2-year	235	238	233
Full-time	1,964	2,151	2,099
Part-time	829	952	958

* Estimated.

NOTE: The source for 1997 figures is *Projections of Education Statistics.*

Enrollment Rates of 18- to 24-Year-Olds

The proportion of 18- and 19-year-olds attending high school or college rose from 55 percent in 1986 to 62 percent in 1996. Enrollment rates for those in their early 20s also increased. The enrollment rate of 20- and 21-year-olds rose from 33 percent in 1986 to 44 percent in 1996.

Table 8.—Percent of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in school: October 1980 to October 1996

Year	18- and 19-year-olds	20- and 21-year-olds	22- to 24-year-olds
1980	46.4	31.0	16.3
1981	49.0	31.6	16.5
1982	47.8	34.0	16.8
1983	50.4	32.5	16.6
1984	50.1	33.9	17.3
1985	51.6	35.3	16.9
1986	54.6	33.0	17.9
1987	55.6	38.7	17.5
1988	55.6	39.1	18.2
1989	56.0	38.5	19.9
1990	57.2	39.7	21.0
1991	59.6	42.0	22.2
1992	61.4	44.0	23.7
1993	61.6	42.7	23.6
1994	60.2	44.9	24.0
1995	59.4	44.9	23.2
1996	61.5	44.4	24.8

Enrollment by Gender

Despite decreases in the traditional college-age population, total college enrollment has continued to grow since 1980. Much of this growth can be attributed to the increase in the proportion of recent high school graduates and the number of women over 24 attending college.

Table 9.—Fall enrollment in institutions of higher education, by sex, and age: 1980, 1990, and 1995

(In thousands)

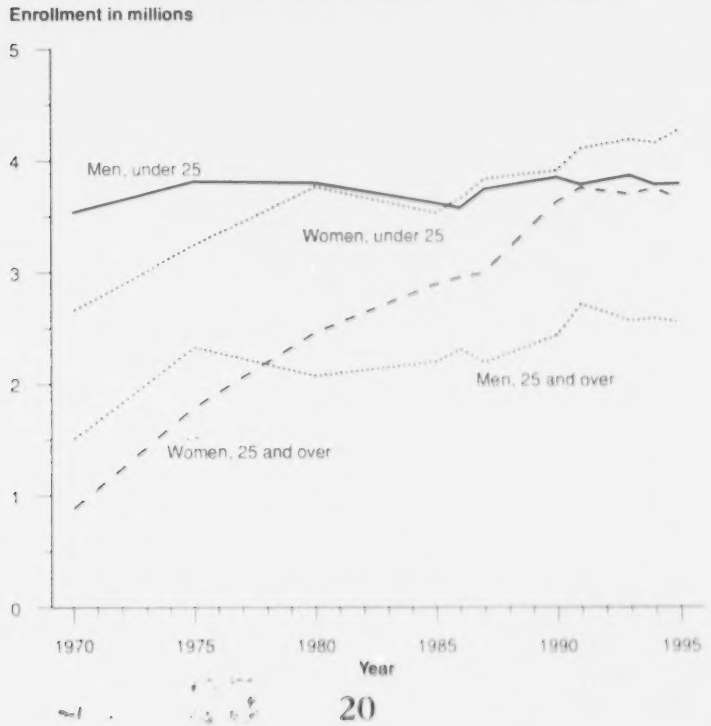
Sex and age	1980	1990	1995
Men and women, total ...	12,097	13,819	14,262
19 years and younger	3,148	2,967	3,100
20 and 21 years old	2,423	2,619	2,655
22 to 24 years old	1,989	2,166	2,308
25 years and older	4,536	6,067	6,197
Men, total	5,874	6,284	6,343
19 years and younger	1,474	1,433	1,418
20 and 21 years old	1,259	1,304	1,227
22 to 24 years old	1,064	1,107	1,145
25 years and older	2,077	2,441	2,551
Women, total	6,223	7,535	7,919
19 years and younger	1,674	1,534	1,683
20 and 21 years old	1,165	1,315	1,428
22 to 24 years old	925	1,059	1,163
25 years and older	2,459	3,627	3,646

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

Enrollment by Age

The number of older students in college has been growing more than the number of younger students. Between 1980 and 1990, the enrollment of students under age 25 increased by 3 percent. During the same period, enrollment of persons 25 and over rose by 34 percent. From 1995 to 2007 however, NCES projects a 4 percent growth in enrollments of persons over 25 and an increase of 20 percent in the number under 25.

Figure 5.—Fall enrollment in institutions of higher education, by age: 1970 to 1995



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Enrollment by Race and Ethnicity

The proportion of American college students who are minorities has been increasing. In 1976, 15.7 percent were minorities, compared with 25.3 percent in 1995. Much of the change can be attributed to rising proportions of Hispanic and Asian students. The proportion of students who are black has fluctuated over the past 15 years and was 10.7 percent in 1995, slightly up from the 1980 level of 9.4 percent. (These percentages exclude foreign students enrolled in American colleges and universities who are not permanent residents.)

Table 10.—Racial/ethnic distribution of fall enrollment in institutions of higher education: 1980, 1990, and 1995

Race/ethnicity	1980	1990	1995*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
White, non-Hispanic	83.5	79.9	74.7
Total minority	16.5	20.1	25.3
Black, non-Hispanic	9.4	9.3	10.7
Hispanic	4.0	5.8	7.9
Asian or Pacific Islander	2.4	4.3	5.8
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7	0.8	1.0

* Preliminary data.

NOTE: Distribution excludes nonresident aliens.

Graduate School Enrollment

Graduate enrollment had been steady at about 1.3 million in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but rose about 18 percent between 1988 and 1995. Enrollment in first-professional programs, after rising very rapidly during the 1970s, stabilized in the early 1980s and showed an increase between 1986 and 1995.

Since 1984, the number of women in graduate schools has exceeded the number of men. Between 1985 and 1995, the number of male full-time graduate students increased by 23 percent, compared with 64 percent for full-time women. Among part-time graduate students, enrollments for men increased by 6 percent compared with 26 percent for women. However, men continue to seek first-professional degrees more than do women.

Table 11.—Fall graduate enrollment [1] in institutions of higher education, by sex: 1970 to 1995

(In thousands)

Year	Total	Men	Women
1970	1,031	630	400
1972	1,066	626	439
1974	1,190	663	526
1976	1,333	714	619
1978	1,312	682	630
1980	1,343	675	670
1981	1,343	674	669
1982	1,322	670	653
1983	1,340	677	663
1984	1,345	672	673
1985	1,376	677	700
1986	1,435	693	742
1987	1,452	693	759
1988	1,472	697	774
1989	1,522	710	811
1990	1,586	737	849
1991	1,639	761	878
1992	1,669	772	896
1993	1,688	771	917
1994	1,721	776	946
1995 [2]	1,732	768	965

[1] Includes full-time and part-time unclassified postbaccalaureate students, but excludes first-professional enrollment.

[2] Preliminary data.

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

Teachers

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Number of Teachers

The number of elementary and secondary school teachers has risen in recent years, up about 20 percent since 1985. The number of public school teachers has grown at a slightly slower rate than the number of students in recent years, and the pupil-teacher ratio, after falling for many years, has remained relatively steady since 1988. In the fall of 1996, the ratio of pupils per public school teacher was 17.0 compared with 17.6 pupils per teacher in 1985. During the same time period, the pupil-teacher ratio in private schools fell from 16.2 to 15.0 pupils per teacher.

Between 1988 and 1991, the supply sources of newly hired teachers shifted as both public and private schools hired a larger proportion of first-time teachers and a smaller proportion of former teachers reentered the field.

Table 12.—Teachers and pupil-teacher ratios in public and private elementary and secondary schools: Fall 1980 to fall 1997

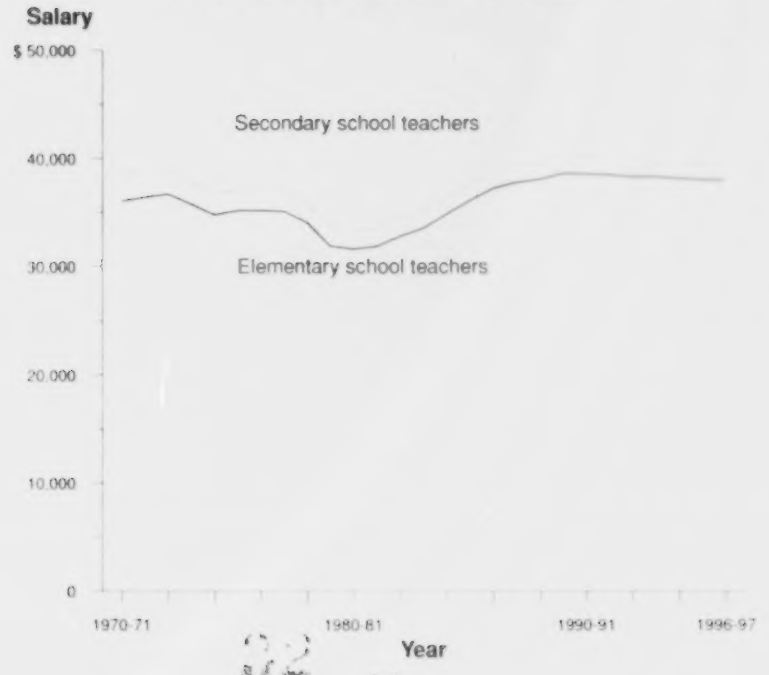
Year	Total	Public school teachers	Private school teachers
	Number in thousands		
1980	2,485	2,184	301
1985	2,549	2,206	343
1988	2,668	2,323	345
1990	2,753	2,398	355
1991	2,787	2,432	355
1992	2,822	2,459	363
1993	2,870	2,504	366
1994	2,926	2,552	373
1995	2,978	2,598	380
1996 [1]	3,023	2,638	385
1997 [2]	3,071	2,682	390
	Pupil-teacher ratios		
1980	18.6	18.7	17.7
1985	17.6	17.9	16.2
1988	17.0	17.3	15.2
1990	16.9	17.2	14.7
1991	17.0	17.3	14.6
1992	17.1	17.4	14.8
1993	17.1	17.4	14.9
1994	17.1	17.4	15.0
1995	17.0	17.3	15.0
1996 [1]	16.9	17.1	15.0
1997 [2]	17.0	17.3	15.0

[1] Preliminary
[2] Estimated

Teachers' Salaries

The average salary for public school teachers has grown rapidly over the past decade, reaching $38,509 in 1996–97. After adjustment for inflation, teachers' salaries rose 19 percent between 1980–81 and 1996–97. Virtually all of this increase occurred during the mid-1980s. Since 1990–91, the average salary for teachers actually fell slightly, after adjusting for inflation.

Figure 6.—Average annual salary for public elementary and secondary school teachers: 1970–71 to 1996–97
(In constant 1996–97 dollars)



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Teacher Characteristics

Teachers in public elementary and secondary schools in 1993–94 were made up of 73 percent women and 87 percent white non-Hispanics. Some 65 percent of teachers had at least 10 years of full-time teaching experience and almost all teachers held at least a bachelor's degree.

Table 13.—Characteristics of teachers in public schools: 1993–94

Selected characteristics	Number, in thousands	Percent
Total	2,561	100.0
Men	694	27.1
Women	1,867	72.9
Race/ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	2,217	86.5
Black, non-Hispanic	188	7.4
Hispanic	109	4.2
Other minorities	48	1.9
Experience		
Less than 3 years	249	9.7
3 to 9 years	653	25.5
10 to 20 years	897	35.0
More than 20 years	762	29.8
Highest degree		
Less than bachelor's	18	0.8
Bachelor's	1,331	52.0
Master's or above	1,212	47.3

NOTE: Excludes prekindergarten teachers.

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Educational Outcomes

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High School Course-Taking Patterns

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education recommended that all students take 4 years of English, 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies, and half a year of computer science. For those going on to college an additional 2 years of foreign language study was highly recommended. Over the past 12 years, the average number of science and mathematics credits earned by high school graduates increased substantially. The mean number of mathematics credits (Carnegie units) earned in high school rose from 2.6 in 1982 to 3.4 in 1994, and the number of science credits rose from 2.2 to 3.0.

The proportion of graduates who completed the full college preparatory program recommended by the Commission on Excellence rose from 3 percent in 1982 to 32 percent in 1994.

Table 14.—Percent of high school graduates earning selected combinations of academic credits: 1982 and 1994

Year of graduation and course combinations taken	All graduates
1982 graduates	
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math, .5 Comp., & 2 F.L.	2.0
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math, & .5 Comp.	2.9
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math, & 2 F.L.	9.2
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math	14.0
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 2 Sci., 2 Math	31.5
1994 graduates	
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math, .5 Comp., & 2 F.L.	25.3
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math, .5 Comp.	32.0
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math, 2 F.L.	39.1
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 3 Sci., 3 Math	49.8
4 Eng., 3 S.S., 2 Sci., 2 Math	74.6

NOTE: Eng. = English; S.S. = social studies; Sci. = science; Comp. = computer science; and F.L. = foreign language.

Graduates

The number of high school graduates in 1996–97 totaled about 2.6 million. About 2.4 million graduated from public schools and less than 0.3 million graduated from private schools. The number of high school graduates has declined from its peak in 1976–77 when approximately 3.2 million people earned their diplomas. Although the number of graduates has been lower in recent years, the ratio of high school graduates to 17-year-olds has remained relatively stable for more than two decades, declining in the 1970s and increasing slightly in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The actual graduation rate is higher than this ratio of 69.7 because many students complete high school through alternative programs, such as night schools and the General Educational Development (GED) program. In 1995, about 87 percent of all 25- to 29-year-olds had completed high school.

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Table 15.—High school graduates compared with population of 17-year-olds: 1976–77 to 1996–97

(In thousands)

School year	Total 17-year-olds	High school graduates	Graduates as a percent of 17-year-olds
1976–77	4,272	3,152	73.8
1978–79	4,327	3,101	71.7
1981–82	4,134	2,995	72.4
1983–84	3,784	2,767	73.1
1984–85	3,699	2,677	72.4
1985–86	3,670	2,643	72.0
1986–87	3,754	2,694	71.8
1987–88	3,849	2,773	72.1
1988–89	3,842	2,727	71.0
1989–90	3,574	2,586	72.4
1990–91	3,417	2,503	73.2
1991–92	3,381	2,482	73.4
1992–93	3,433	2,490	72.5
1993–94	3,442	2,479	72.0
1994–95	3,571	2,531	70.9
1995–96	3,629	2,557	70.4
1996–97* ...	3,762	2,623	69.7

*Preliminary data.

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Dropouts

The dropout rate among 16- to 24-year-olds has fallen over the past 20 years. Having fallen more for blacks than for whites, the difference in dropout rates between the races has narrowed. The dropout rate for Hispanics remains relatively high at 29 percent, compared to 7 percent for whites and 13 percent for blacks.

Figure 7.—Percent of high school dropouts among 16- to 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: 1970 to 1996

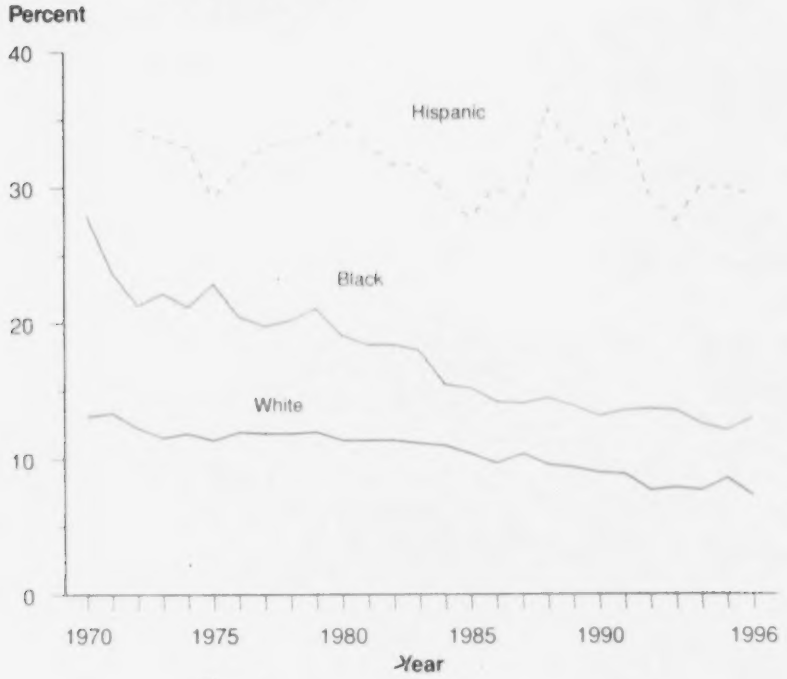

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Table 16.—Percent of high school dropouts among persons 16 to 24 years old, by race/ethnicity: October 1975 to October 1996

Year	All races	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1975	13.9	11.4	22.9	29.2
1977	14.1	11.9	19.8	33.0
1979	14.6	12.0	21.1	33.8
1980	14.1	11.4	19.1	35.2
1981	13.9	11.4	18.4	33.2
1982	13.9	11.4	18.4	31.7
1983	13.7	11.2	18.0	31.6
1984	13.1	11.0	15.5	29.8
1985	12.6	10.4	15.2	27.6
1986	12.2	9.7	14.2	30.1
1987	12.7	10.4	14.1	28.6
1988	12.9	9.6	14.5	35.8
1989	12.6	9.4	13.9	33.0
1990	12.1	9.0	13.2	32.4
1991	12.5	8.9	13.6	35.3
1992* ...	11.0	7.7	13.7	29.4
1993* ...	11.0	7.9	13.6	27.5
1994* ...	11.5	7.7	12.6	30.0
1995* ...	12.0	8.6	12.1	30.0
1996* ...	11.1	7.3	13.0	29.4

*Wording of questionnaire was changed.

NOTE: Dropouts are persons not enrolled in school who neither graduated from high school, nor received GED credentials.

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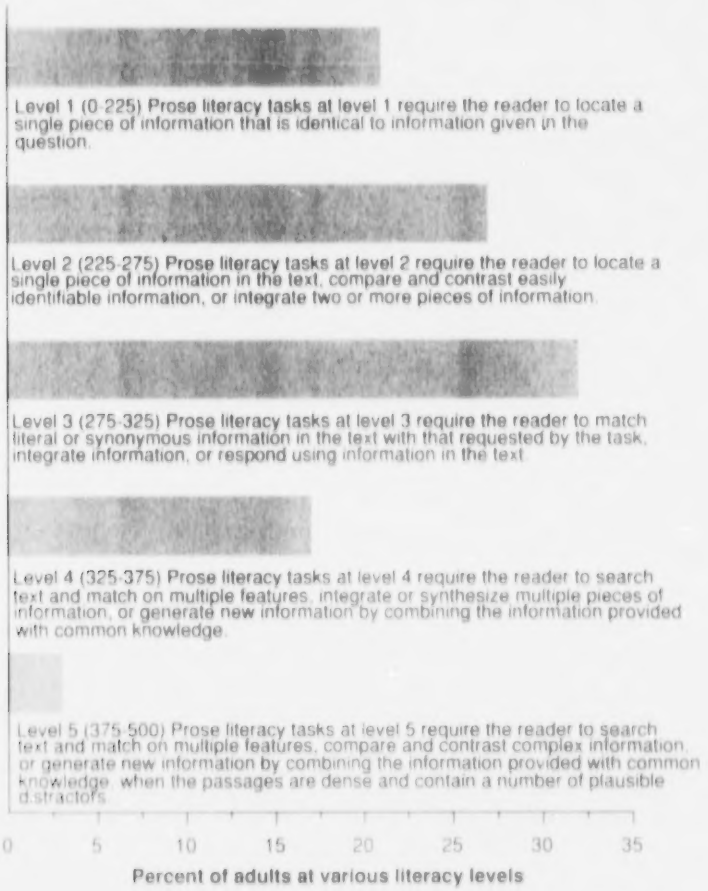
Literacy Rates

Some 90 million adults—about 47 percent of the U.S. adult population—performed at the two lowest levels of literacy in 1992 on a national survey of adult literacy. Literacy was defined as "using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential." Three scales were developed measuring different aspects of literacy: prose, quantitative, and document.

Adults with higher levels of educational attainment had higher average levels of prose literacy. Also, adults aged 19 to 54 had higher average literacy scores than those 55 and older. The differences in literacy between younger and older adults may be due to the higher level of educational attainment among younger adults.

On all three literacy scales, the average literacy scores for Hispanics were below those of blacks which were below those of whites. On the quantitative literacy scale, the difference between blacks and whites was larger than the difference between white high school and college graduates.

Figure 8.—Prose literacy of adults aged 16 and older: 1992


Level 1 (0-225) Prose literacy tasks at level 1 require the reader to locate a single piece of information that is identical to information given in the question.
Level 2 (225-275) Prose literacy tasks at level 2 require the reader to locate a single piece of information in the text, compare and contrast easily identifiable information, or integrate two or more pieces of information.
Level 3 (275-325) Prose literacy tasks at level 3 require the reader to match literal or synonymous information in the text with that requested by the task, integrate information, or respond using information in the text.
Level 4 (325-375) Prose literacy tasks at level 4 require the reader to search text and match on multiple features, integrate or synthesize multiple pieces of information, or generate new information by combining the information provided with common knowledge.
Level 5 (375-500) Prose literacy tasks at level 5 require the reader to search text and match on multiple features, compare and contrast complex information, or generate new information by combining the information provided with common knowledge, when the passages are dense and contain a number of plausible distractors.
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
Percent of adults at various literacy levels

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992*.

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Completions

Americans are becoming more educated. Between 1980 and 1996, the proportion of the adult population 25 years of age and over with 4 years of high school or more rose from 69 percent to 82 percent. At the same time, the proportion of adults with at least 4 years of college increased from 17 percent to 24 percent.

Table 17.—Percent of persons 25 years and older who completed various years of school: 1970 to 1996

Year	Less than 5 years of elementary school	4 years of high school or more	4 or more years of college
March 1970	5.3	55.2	11.0
March 1980	3.4	68.6	17.0
March 1985	2.7	73.9	19.4
March 1986	2.7	74.7	19.4
March 1987	2.4	75.6	19.9
March 1988	2.4	76.2	20.3
March 1989	2.5	76.9	21.1
March 1990	2.4	77.6	21.3
March 1991	2.4	78.4	21.4
March 1992	2.8	80.8	21.4
March 1993	2.1	81.5	21.9
March 1994	1.9	80.9	22.2
March 1995	1.8	81.7	23.0
March 1996	1.8	81.7	23.6

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Reading Performance

Long-term trends in reading achievement show improvements for many of the country's 13- and 17-year-old students and for some groups of 9-year-olds. However, many of the advancements in performance that had been made prior to 1988 among black students have not continued—or have reversed between 1988 and 1992.

Table 18.—Proficiency of 17-year-olds in reading, by selected characteristics: 1971, 1980, and 1996

Selected characteristics of students	1971	1980	1996
Total	285.2	285.5	286.7
Sex			
Male	278.9	281.8	279.9
Female	291.3	289.2	294.4
Race/ethnicity			
White	291.4	292.8	294.4
Black	238.7	243.1	265.4
Hispanic	—	261.4	264.7
Control of school			
Public	—	284.4	286.0
Private	—	298.4	294.0
Parents' education level			
Did not graduate high school	261.3	262.1	267.0
Graduated high school	283.0	277.5	273.0
Post high school	302.2	298.9	297.0

— Data not available.

NOTE: Scale ranges from 0 to 500.

Mathematics Performance

Results from national assessments of mathematics achievement indicate that students have made some improvements in their basic computation skills. Average proficiency for 9- and 13-year-olds improved between 1982 and 1992. For 17-year-old students, average proficiency had declined between 1973 and 1982, but an upturn during the past decade returned their performance to the 1973 level. However, the performance of older students on advanced mathematical operations has shown little or no improvement.

Table 19.—Percent of 17-year-old students performing at or above three mathematics proficiency levels, by race/ethnicity: 1982 to 1996

Year and race/ethnicity	Numerical operations and beginning problem solving	Moderately complex procedures and reasoning	Multistep problem solving and algebra
Total			
1982	93	48	6
1990	96	56	7
1992	97	59	7
1996	97	60	7
White			
1982	96	55	6
1990	98	63	8
1992	98	66	9
1996	99	69	9
Black			
1982	76	17	1
1990	92	33	2
1992	90	30	1
1996	91	31	1
Hispanic			
1982	81	22	1
1990	86	30	2
1992	94	39	1
1996	92	40	2

College Degrees

The number of degrees conferred by institutions of higher education in 1996–97 was estimated to be 529,000 associate degrees; 1,183,000 bachelor's degrees; 410,000 master's degrees; 77,000 first-professional degrees; and 44,200 doctor's degrees. In 1994–95, women earned the majority of degrees at the bachelor's and master's degree levels.

Figure 9.—Percent of bachelor's, master's, first-professional, and doctor's degrees awarded to women: 1959–60 to 1994–95

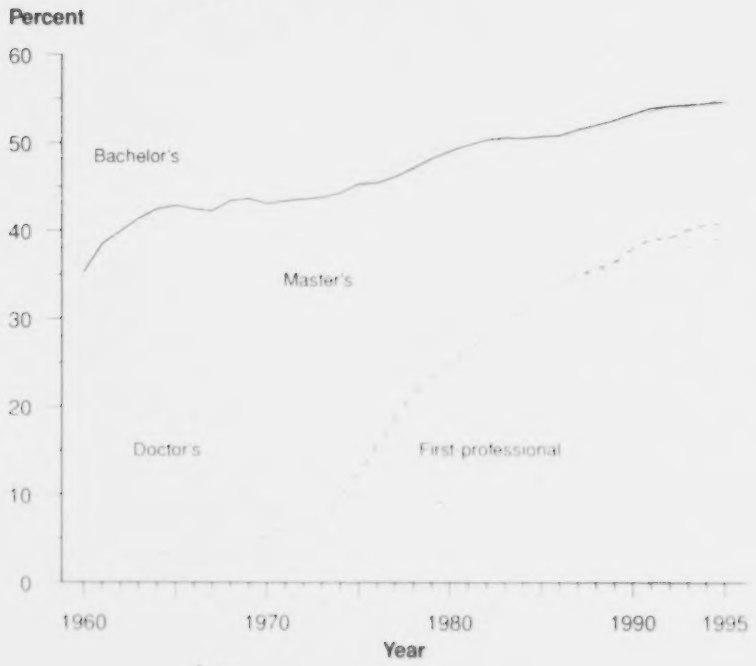

Table 20.—Degrees conferred by institutions of higher education, by level of degree: 1960-61 to 1996-97

Year	Bachelor's degrees	Master's degrees	Doctor's degrees
1960-61	365,174	84,609	10,575
1970-71	839,730	230,509	32,107
1980-81	935,140	295,739	32,958
1981-82	952,998	295,546	32,707
1982-83	969,510	289,921	32,775
1983-84	974,309	284,263	33,209
1984-85	979,477	286,251	32,943
1985-86	987,823	288,567	33,653
1986-87	991,264	289,349	34,041
1987-88	994,829	299,317	34,870
1988-89	1,018,755	310,621	35,720
1989-90	1,051,344	324,301	38,371
1990-91	1,094,538	337,168	39,294
1991-92	1,136,553	352,838	40,659
1992-93	1,165,178	369,585	42,132
1993-94	1,169,275	387,070	43,185
1994-95	1,160,134	397,629	44,446
1995-96 [1]	1,186,000	406,000	43,600
1996-97 [1]	1,183,000	410,000	44,200

[1] Projected.

Finance

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Overall Expenditures

Expenditures for public and private education, from preprimary through graduate school, are estimated at about $560 billion for 1996–97. The expenditures of elementary and secondary schools are expected to total about $340 billion for 1996–97, while institutions of higher education will spend about $225 billion.

Viewed in another context, the total expenditures for education are expected to amount to about 7.4 percent of the gross domestic product in 1996–97. This is somewhat higher than the 1986–87 figure of 6.6 percent.

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Table 21.—Total expenditures of educational institutions related to the gross domestic product in current dollars: 1980–81 to 1996–97

School year	Total expenditures in millions of dollars	As a percent of gross domestic product
1980–81	$182,849	6.6
1981–82	197,801	6.3
1982–83	212,081	6.5
1983–84	228,597	6.5
1984–85	247,657	6.3
1985–86	269,485	6.4
1986–87	291,974	6.6
1987–88	313,375	6.7
1988–89	346,883	6.9
1989–90	381,525	7.0
1990–91	412,652	7.2
1991–92	432,994	7.3
1992–93	456,070	7.3
1993–94 [1]	477,237	7.3
1994–95 [2]	503,891	7.3
1995–96 [3]	533,400	7.4
1996–97 [3]	564,200	7.4

[1] Revised.
[2] Preliminary.
[3] Estimated.

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Public Elementary and Secondary School Revenues

The state share of revenues for public elementary and secondary schools grew through most of the 1980s, but in 1987–88 the trend began to reverse. Between 1986–87 and 1993–94, the local share of school funding rose while the proportion from state governments fell. In 1994–95, a greater share shifted back to the states as 46.8 percent of revenues came from state sources, 46.4 percent came from local sources, and 6.8 percent came from the federal government.

Table 22.—Percent of revenues for public elementary and secondary schools from various sources: 1970–71 to 1994–95

School year	Federal	State	Local*
1970–71	8.4	39.1	52.5
1975–76	8.9	44.4	46.7
1980–81	9.2	47.4	43.4
1981–82	7.4	47.6	45.0
1982–83	7.1	47.9	45.0
1983–84	6.8	47.8	45.4
1984–85	6.6	48.9	44.4
1985–86	6.7	49.4	43.9
1986–87	6.4	49.7	43.9
1987–88	6.3	49.5	44.1
1988–89	6.2	47.8	46.0
1989–90	6.1	47.1	46.8
1990–91	6.2	47.2	46.7
1991–92	6.6	46.4	47.0
1992–93	7.0	45.8	47.2
1993–94	7.1	45.2	47.8
1994–95	6.8	46.8	46.4

*Includes a relatively small amount from nongovernmental sources.

NOTE: Beginning in 1980–81, revenues for state education agencies are excluded. Beginning in 1988–89, new survey procedures were implemented. Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

Public Elementary and Secondary School Expenditures

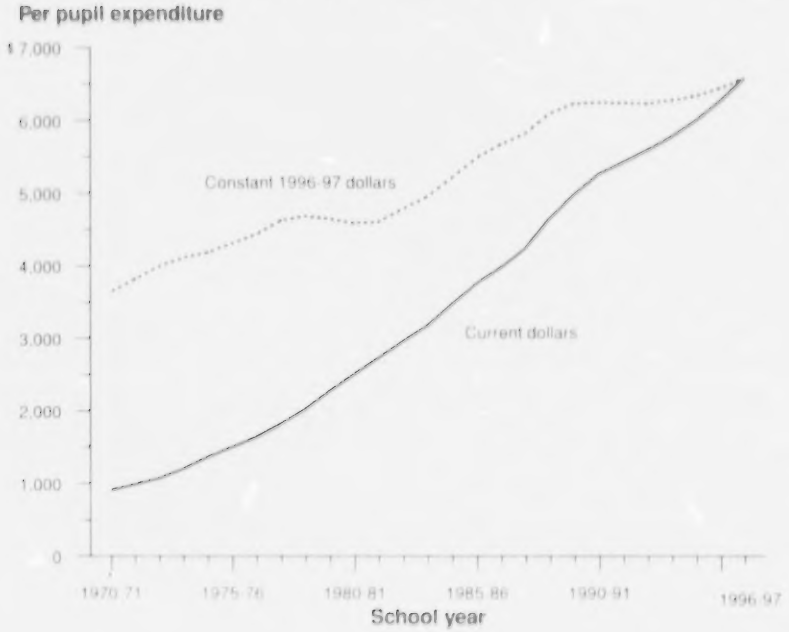
The expenditure per student in public schools has risen significantly in the past 10 years, especially during the mid-1980s. In 1996–97, the estimated current expenditure per student in average daily attendance was $6,564. After adjustment for inflation, this represents an increase of 16 percent since 1986–87.

Table 23.—Current expenditure per pupil in average daily attendance: 1980–81 to 1996–97

School year	Unadjusted dollars	Constant dollars (1996–97)
1980–81	$2,502	$4,589
1981–82	2,726	4,603
1982–83	2,955	4,785
1983–84	3,173	4,954
1984–85	3,470	5,214
1985–86	3,756	5,484
1986–87	3,970	5,672
1987–88	4,240	5,816
1988–89	4,645	6,090
1989–90	4,980	6,232
1990–91	5,258	6,239
1991–92	5,421	6,233
1992–93	5,584	6,225
1993–94	5,767	6,268
1994–95*	5,988	6,327
1995–96*	6,255	6,434
1996–97*	6,564	6,564

* Estimated.

Figure 10.—Current expenditure per student in average daily attendance in public elementary and secondary schools: 1970–71 to 1996–97



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Federal Aid for Public Elementary and Secondary Education

Thirty-three percent of public elementary and secondary school students in the United States received publicly funded free or reduced-price lunches in 1993–94. At public elementary schools the participation rate was 39 percent, compared with 22 percent for public secondary schools. About 14 percent of all public elementary and secondary school children received Chapter I services in 1993–94. Federally sponsored Chapter I programs are designed to assist poorly performing students in economically disadvantaged areas. Children in rural areas (14 percent) and central cities (19 percent) were more likely to receive services than those in suburban areas (10 percent).

Table 24.—Percent of public school students participating in federal programs, by school characteristics: 1993–94

School characteristics	Percent free or reduced price	Percent ECIA* Chapter 1
Total	33.2	14.3
Community type		
Central city	44.9	19.4
Urban fringe/large town	24.0	10.2
Rural/small town	32.2	13.9
School size (students)		
Less than 150	38.6	16.7
150–299	38.1	16.7
300–499	37.0	16.3
500–749	33.5	15.5
750 or more	29.7	11.7
Minority students (percent)		
Less than 5	22.0	8.8
5 to 19	18.9	6.6
20 to 49	32.0	10.8
50 or more	57.3	29.0

*Education Consolidation and Improvement Act.

Higher Education Revenues

Private colleges are heavily dependent on tuition for revenues, receiving 42 percent from this source. In contrast, public colleges receive much of their revenue—40 percent—from state and local governments.

Table 25.—Sources of current-fund revenue for institutions of higher education: 1994-95

Source	Public	Private
Total	100.0	100.0
Tuition and fees	18.4	42.4
Federal government	11.1	14.4
State governments	35.9	2.1
Local governments	4.0	0.6
Private gifts, grants, and contracts	4.0	8.8
Endowment income	0.6	4.7
Sales and services	23.1	22.2
Educational activities	3.0	2.8
Auxiliary enterprises	9.5	10.0
Hospitals	10.5	9.4
Other sources	3.1	4.7

Higher Education Expenditures

Trend data show some increases in the expenditures per student at institutions of higher education through the late 1980s and relatively small fluctuations thereafter. After adjustment for inflation, current-fund expenditures per student rose about 16 percent between 1980–81 and 1988–89, but increased only 7 percent between 1988–89 and 1994–95.

Table 26.—Current-fund expenditures and expenditures per full-time-equivalent student in institutions of higher education: 1980–81 to 1994–95

Year	Expenditures in millions		Per student, in constant 1994–95 dollars
	Unadjusted dollars	Constant 1994–95 dollars	
1980–81	$ 64,053	$125,568	$14,238
1985–86	97,536	141,062	15,773
1986–87	105,764	147,142	16,233
1987–88	113,786	151,775	16,444
1988–89	123,867	156,886	16,577
1989–90	134,656	160,860	16,446
1990–91	146,088	165,803	16,608
1991–92	156,189	171,258	16,530
1992–93	165,241	176,020	16,865
1993–94	173,351	178,552	17,249
1994–95 *	182,969	182,969	17,681

* Preliminary data.

College Costs

For the 1996–97 academic year, annual undergraduate charges for tuition, room, and board were estimated to be $6,534 at public colleges and $18,071 at private colleges. Between 1986–87 and 1996–97, charges at public colleges increased by 20 percent and charges at private colleges by 31 percent, after adjusting for inflation.

Figure 11.—Average undergraduate tuition, room, and board charges at public and private colleges: 1966–67 to 1996–97

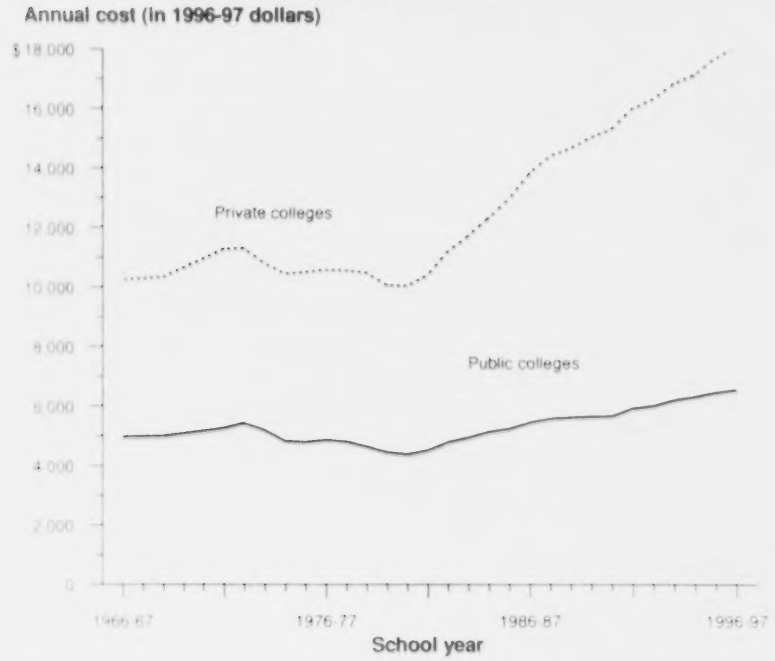

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Table 27.—Average undergraduate tuition, room, and board charges: 1986-87 to 1996-97

Year and control of institution	Total tuition, room, and board		
	All institutions	4-year	2-year [1]
All			
1986-87	$ 5,206	$ 5,964	$ 3,295
1990-91	6,562	7,602	3,930
1992-93	7,452	8,758	4,207
1994-95	8,306	9,728	4,633
1995-96	8,800	10,330	4,725
1996-97 [2]	9,199	10,825	4,896
Public			
1986-87	3,805	4,138	2,989
1990-91	4,757	5,243	3,467
1992-93	5,379	6,020	3,799
1994-95	5,965	6,670	4,137
1995-96	6,256	7,014	4,217
1996-97 [2]	6,534	7,331	4,412
Private			
1986-87	9,676	10,039	6,384
1990-91	12,910	13,237	9,302
1992-93	14,634	15,009	9,903
1994-95	16,207	16,602	11,170
1995-96	17,208	17,612	11,563
1996-97 [2]	18,071	18,476	11,889

[1] Due to a low response rate, data for private 2-year colleges must be interpreted with caution.

[2] Preliminary data.

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Scholarships and Fellowships

One of the most rapidly rising expenditures at institutions of higher education during the past decade was for scholarships and fellowships. The proportion of educational and general expenditures spent on scholarships rose from 2.9 percent at public colleges in 1984–85 to 5.1 percent in 1994–95. At private colleges, the proportion expended for scholarships rose from 9.9 percent to 14.7 percent during the same time period.

On a per student basis, adjusted for inflation, expenditures for scholarships and fellowships rose by 90 percent at public universities between 1984–85 and 1994–95, compared with 11 percent for instructional expenditures. At private universities during the same period, the per student expenditures on scholarships and fellowships rose by 78 percent, and the instructional costs rose by 38 percent. Another rapidly rising expenditure in the public sector during the decade was for research, which rose by 38 percent per student at public universities and by 46 percent at other public 4-year colleges.

Table 28.—Educational and general expenditures of institutions of higher education: 1984-85 to 1994-95

(In millions)

Year	Total expenditures	Scholarships and fellowships	Percent of total
	Public		
1984-85	$46,874	1,375	2.9
1986-87	54,359	1,752	3.8
1988-89	63,445	2,150	3.4
1989-90	69,164	2,386	3.5
1990-91	74,395	2,689	3.6
1991-92	78,555	3,256	4.1
1992-93	83,211	3,728	4.5
1993-94	87,139	4,223	4.8
1994-95 * ...	92,174	4,662	5.1
	Private		
1984-85	$23,188	2,296	9.9
1986-87	28,596	3,024	10.6
1988-89	33,358	3,768	11.3
1989-90	36,421	4,269	11.7
1990-91	39,744	4,863	12.2
1991-92	43,013	5,804	13.5
1992-93	45,767	6,421	14.0
1993-94	48,885	7,015	14.4
1994-95 * ...	51,984	7,623	14.7

* Preliminary data

Aid to Higher Education

About 68 percent of all full-time undergraduate students received some form of financial aid in 1996. Students at private colleges were more likely to receive aid than students at public colleges. About 63 percent of full-time undergraduates at public colleges received aid compared with 80 percent at private nonprofit colleges. Students obtained aid through a variety of programs: 56 percent received some sort of federal aid, 11 percent participated in work-study programs, and 11 percent received aid through other types of programs. About 32 percent received aid through private sources. Private colleges provided aid from their own sources to over half of their full-time undergraduates. For all full-time undergraduates, the average student aid package from all sources totalled $6,306 in 1995–96.

Table 29.—Percent of full-time undergraduate and graduate students receiving financial aid, by type and source: 1995–96

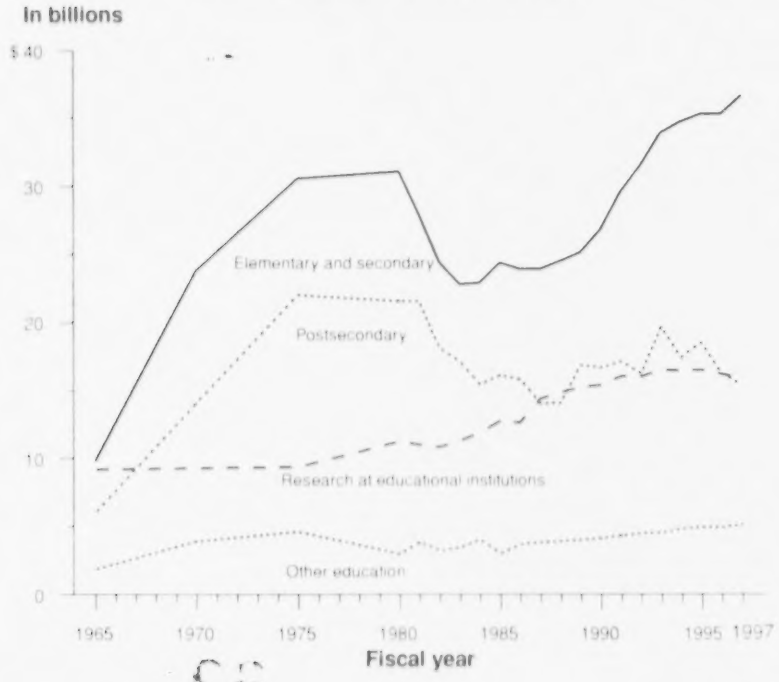
Selected student characteristics	Aid from all sources	Grants	Loans
All undergraduates	57.9	48.1	33.6
Public	51.9	42.3	26.9
4-year doctoral	53.7	41.9	33.0
Other 4-year	56.4	45.5	33.7
2-year	45.9	40.6	12.7
Less than 2-year	35.0	29.9	3.0
Private, nonprofit	69.5	62.1	46.5
4-year doctoral	62.7	55.2	41.6
Other 4-year	75.5	68.7	51.7
2-year	73.9	61.3	41.1
All graduate students	76.1	5.2	48.7
Master's degree	72.6	4.3	43.1
Public	74.7	4.8	39.5
Private	69.4	3.6	48.6
Doctor's degree	82.9	15.8	25.2
Public	85.9	13.7	26.7
Private	77.5	19.6	22.6
First professional	83.2	1.4	74.4
Public	85.7	2.0	79.0
Private	81.0	0.9	70.6

NOTE: Data include students in all types of postsecondary institutions.

Federal Funding

Federal on-budget support for education showed sizable growth between fiscal years 1965 and 1995, after adjustment for inflation. (On-budget support excludes education funds that are generated by federal subsidies, such as Guaranteed Student Loans.) Particularly large increases occurred between 1965 and 1975. After a period of relative

Figure 12.—Federal on-budget funds for education, by level: 1965 to 1997
(In constant 1997 dollars)



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stability between 1975 and 1980, federal funding for education declined approximately 16 percent between 1980 and 1985 after adjustment for inflation. From 1987 to 1997, federal funding for education increased by 30 percent.

Table 30.—Federal funds for education: Fiscal years 1965 to 1997

(In millions of dollars)

Fiscal year	Total on-budget support	
	Unadjusted dollars	Constant 1997 dollars
1965	$ 5,331.0	$27,009.4
1970	12,526.5	51,116.3
1975	23,288.1	67,013.5
1980	34,493.5	66,882.7
1985	39,027.9	56,246.2
1986	39,962.9	56,012.6
1988	43,454.4	57,371.4
1990	51,624.3	62,922.9
1991	57,595.7	67,029.6
1992	60,479.8	68,239.4
1993	67,740.6	74,553.0
1994	68,250.9	73,396.4
1995	71,636.3	73,223.1
1996	70,743.4	72,622.9
1997 [1]	73,070.4	73,070.4

[1] Estimated.

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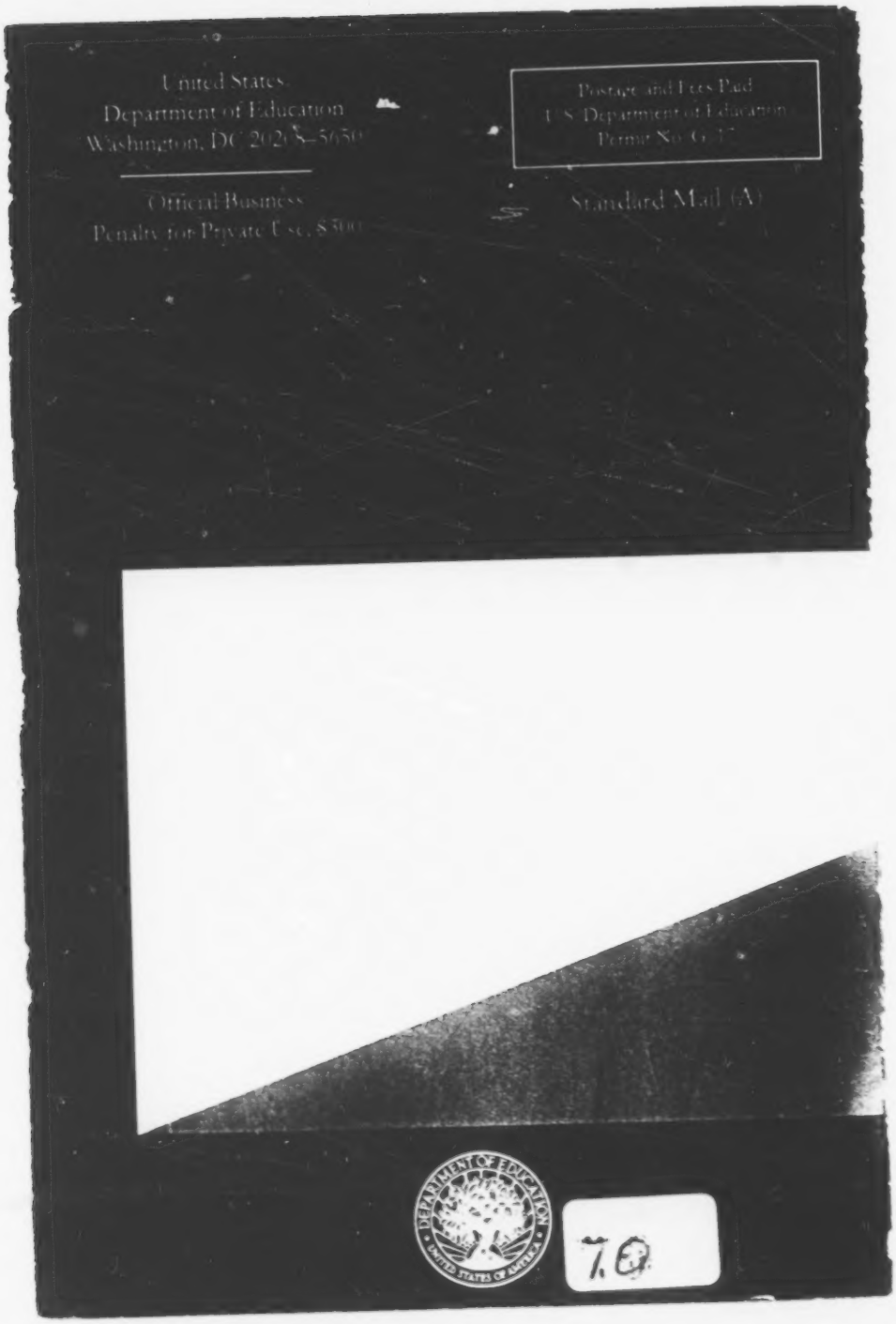
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